



SATURDAY, JULY 23, 1898

The John Navy Manuscripts.

By CHARLES W. HARWOOD.

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Kepler Paine had swung his chair around facing his guests, but his hand still rested affectionately on a copy of The Maxima, which lay open upon his desk. There was an air of entire satisfaction on Paine's face. The Maxima was just out that day, and it contained a story which he had written a year before, the first of his stories which that magazine had deigned to accept.

Jack Hall was lying upon the lounge with a pipe in his mouth, and Frarie had just entered the room. A thin faced, dark complexioned man was Frarie, always cool, self possessed and critical. With a quiet but friendly greeting he sat down and helped himself to a cigarette from Paine's box. Frarie wrote the book reviews for The Polygon.

"I looked over your story in the advance sheets," he remarked, blowing out a cloud of smoke. "I gave you three lines. There are good points about that story, Paine. Your burglar is undeniably strong."

"I should say so!" exclaimed Jack Hall. "I call 'John Navy's Confession' the best thing out this year!"

Hall was an artist, not a literary man. "Yes, there are some things in it which are really bright," Frarie admitted. "They have character. Ten to one you picked them up somewhere, Paine."

"There is a story about that, Frarie. John Navy was an actual burglar whom I used to know when I lived in Bolton."

"I thought as much," said Frarie, with satisfaction.

Hall sprang up and went to the table to shake out his pipe and refill it. "Kep, I've heard just enough about that old burglar to make me curious," he said abruptly. "How did you get acquainted with your interesting friend?"

"Tell us about it if you don't mind," added Frarie.

"You may have heard of the Penniwell bank robbery, which occurred about seven years ago," Paine began. "The Navy gang made that break. Its leader, old John Navy, was the most audacious burglar of his day. His skill and boldness had drawn around him a picked lot of clever criminals, stanch men, all of them, and adept at their calling."

"We in Maine had heard little about their operations until they visited the town of Penniwell, a dozen miles from Bolton, and broke into the vault of its bank. They had secured most of the money when an alarm was raised and they were compelled to fly. All of them escaped except Navy. Laden as he was with the bulk of the spoils, he nearly eluded his pursuers by running to cover in the ravines of Colquhann mountain. There, before he was brought to bay, he safely concealed his plunder, and to this day it has never been found."

"Of course a reward was offered," said Frarie.

"Certainly. The Penniwell money is as seductive to the people of that vicinity as Captain Kidd's gold, and even now they will not allow a stranger to go up on the mountain side alone. It was useless as long as he lived, and unusual precautions were taken to prevent his sending them any message."

"How did you come to know him?"

"I used to do some charitable work at that time, especially in the Bolton prison, where he was confined."

"Did you reform any criminals?" Jack Hall skeptically inquired.

"Come, Hall, let him alone," Frarie interposed. "We want to hear about the burglar."

"I had been in and out for months before I saw Navy, but at last the warden gained confidence in my discretion, and after an explicit warning volunteered to take me to the convict's cell."

"Navy is a crafty old fellow," he admonished me. "Don't repeat a word that he says. He will try to use you when you least suspect it."

"We found the prisoner sitting by the door, with his grizzled head resting upon his hands. Woe, dogged endurance was graven in every line of his face. He brightened upon our entrance, and with a slight twinkle of the eyes looked me over humorously. By that one glance he had probed my inexperience, and after the warden's departure he warily tested his conclusions."

"This is very kind," he began smiling. "It is pleasant to meet a gentleman of your cloth. I suppose you would like me to repent of my evil ways?"

"I had not thought of it," I answered curtly. "Would you prefer to see a clergyman?"

"Navy turned quickly upon me. 'I thought you were one of them!' he exclaimed."

"Not at all. I came here with mere-

ly a human interest in you.

"Surprised as he was, Navy quickly recovered his poise.

"Now, I call that kind!" he said, with a touch of feeling. "Just because I'm a human being that's lonely and needs company! That does me good. If I wasn't wearing those stripes, I'd offer you my hand on that!"

"Of course he made no motion to do so, but I promptly put out my hand.

"Thank you!" he said, giving it a firm clasp. "It seems good to meet a gentleman again."

"You have a few visitors?" I suggested.

"You are the first outsider, excepting the Penniwell people. There's the chaplain. He wants me to be sorry for my sins. Lord, I'm no hypocrite!" he broke out scornfully. "Cracking safe is my profession, and if I was free I'd beat it again. I've talked some with the warden, but he hasn't a particle of sympathy with my feelings. He only shakes his head and says, 'Ah, John, we ought to have caught you long ago!' Now, I call that a kind of wet blanket on a man's professional enthusiasm, don't you?"

"I smiled and assented readily. He was such a fascinating old sinner.

"So you are driven back upon your memories?" I remarked.

"That's just it, and comforting they are too. You would be surprised to know of the fortunes I've made. Well, everything is gone now, and I'm laid on the shelf, but it's a great consolation to look back on a successful career. When I get blue sitting here alone, I hark back to some time when I outwitted the officers, and it heartens me wonderfully."

"Then he paused a moment. 'I wonder if you would be interested to hear of such matters?' he asked doubtfully.

"Indeed I would!" was my instant response. "Do you mind if I use this? Sometimes I write stories for the magazines."

"Navy was interested at once.

"How do you make out?" he asked critically.

"Poorly enough so far."

"Lord! What you need is life!" he declared. "Why, I could give you stories to write until your hair is gray!"

"Nothing could please me better," said I.

"Will you put in my own name?" he asked eagerly.

"Certainly, if you wish me to."

"Navy seemed gratified. I well remember the delightful animation with which he began a story of one of his earlier escapades. I wrote it out carefully, and after that I often visited him, quite as much for my own advantage as for his."

"Meanwhile my notes kept pace with his stories, and Navy showed the utmost interest in them. That a man of his stamp should be so concerned I laid to the killing monotony of prison life, but at last I discovered that he was brooding over some scheme which he was half ashamed to propose. One day I frankly inquired what was on his mind."

"I've got a notion that I'd like to write out one of my stories myself," he confessed, with some diffidence. "It's all fully made, but it would do me good to try."

"It did seem dull, but he was such a genial, open hearted old fellow that it would have been cruel not to humor him. On my next visit we carried out his project, and never had I seen him so cheerful and happy as when he handed me his completed manuscript."

"It would do me good to have that published," he said, smiling upon me with open kindness. "You may find mistakes in it, but don't make any changes. Let it go, title and all, just as it is. You see, it is my own work!"

"That was my last meeting with John Navy. I carried his story home and read it, but I saw that it would be quite useless for publication unless some journal would take it as news. Yet with all its faults there were certain novel expressions scattered through it which could hardly be improved."

"In order to preserve these bits I copied the whole manuscript for my own benefit. It was short—a matter of two columns only—and I was on the point of sending it to one of the New York dailies when I remembered my promise to the warden."

"The story seemed perfectly harmless. Still there was my promise, and after some indecision about suppressing the manuscript entirely I felt that I must give it up. The warden listened rather triumphantly to my explanation."

"I told you Navy would try to use you," he said gruffly. "We will keep a strict watch after this."

"He ran over the story hastily and with evident disappointment.

"Pshaw! There's nothing about the Penniwell case here," he exclaimed. "This affair happened a dozen years ago. Navy is concocted. He wants to keep his name before the profession."

"I remarked that the story was fairly well told."

"Oh, yes, he is smart enough and would be a dangerous fellow at large! It's lucky for the whole country that we have him behind the bars. As for this stuff, it doesn't really amount to anything, but we can't let it go out while the man lives; thanks to you just the same."

"That was rather hard on the ambitious old coddler," observed Hall.

"All you could do nevertheless," said Frarie.

"It seemed so to me," Paine continued. "Yet I felt mean about it and did not visit the prison again. This fell out the more naturally because matters of business were occupying my time, and within a fortnight I had removed from Bolton to this city."

"Where is your copy of Navy's story, Kep?" asked Jack Hall.

"It is still at my old home. I culled out what I wanted to go with my other notes. There were some parts which did not seem so bright on a second reading."

Frie arose, and flicking away a particle of cigarette ash he took up his hat. "There may be a call for more of Navy's adventures," he said. "I advise you not to kill off the old man until you have exhausted your material. By the way, I inferred that he was dead. Is that so?"

"He died in prison more than a year ago. Not until then did I feel at liberty to write him up."

"Well, good night! Come on, Hall."

On the afternoon of the next day, while Paine was busy at his desk, a stranger was shown to his room by the landlady. Paine whirled his chair around and rose to greet him.

The stranger shot a quick, penetrating glance at his host and bowed with mingled deference and assurance. He was dressed expensively, and a slight swagger in his bearing indicated that he was conscious of bringing his welcome in his pocket.

"Sporting man," thought Paine. "What does he want of me?"

"Are you Mr. Kepler Paine?" asked the newcomer, with much suavity.

"I am."

"Then you wrote 'John Navy's Confession,' which has just appeared in The Maxima?"

"I did," Paine answered, with a smile. Take a chair, Mr. —. Have you read it?"

"I've read it," said the man emphatically. "Best thing I ever read. I got on to it from that name. Excuse me, I forgot to mention my own. It's Perkins of Chicago. I should have been sorry to miss that story of yours. Now, when are you going to give us the rest of it?"

"The rest of it," Paine repeated in bewilderment. "The story is complete in this number of The Maxima."

"Then he realized that the public was thirsting for his work. 'I can write more tales of the same sort if that is what you mean.' 'About this same John Navy?'"

"Certainly."

"That's just what I mean. That story reads like the truth," said Perkins, weighing his words carefully. "You must have known somebody just like him." He looked inquiringly at Paine.

"I did. I knew old John Navy himself."

"Where?" Perkins asked eagerly.

"Beggins, my pardon, I didn't mean!"

"Oh, it is no secret! He was a convict in the Bolton prison. I used to visit him there in the course of some charitable work which I did."

With some reluctance Paine added this last explanation, which he considered a detail of no possible interest to a stranger, yet his words made a marked impression upon Perkins.

"You were good to him, then?" he asked respectfully.

"I liked the man. I couldn't help liking him."

"No wonder! John Navy, according to your story, was a square, open hearted man. It didn't harm you any to befriend him. You had a rare chance, young man. I suppose he talked pretty freely?"

"He told me a great deal about his life," Paine admitted, a trifle mystified by these questions. "I wrote it all down," he added at length.

Again an eager light flashed in the visitor's eyes.

"Desk's full of it, I suppose?" he observed casually.

"My head is full of it," Paine replied. "Yes, of course, I have my notes."

Silence ensued for a few moments.

"I was amused at some parts of that story," Perkins went on, still dallying with his errand. "The old man said some queer things."

"He used other expressions quite as peculiar as those in my story."

"And you remember them all?" asked Perkins, coming sharply to business.

"What's your price for the rest of it?" Paine was taken unawares. "So you are a publisher?" Yes, of course; you've hit it."

"If you want my work, make me an offer," said Paine, with instant shrewdness. "Of course I shall expect an advance on what The Maxima paid me."

"That's business," Perkins replied. "I don't know what those fellows paid you, but it's worth more to me than it is to them. How would \$500 strike you?"

"Dose!" cried Paine. "You shall have the best story I can write. Five thousand words?" he asked in the next breath.

"I don't care about the number of words," said the man, with a touch of impatience. "It's Navy's talk that brings the dollars. Can I have it now?"

"Oh, no!" said Paine in surprise. "It isn't written yet. When must you have the story?"

"Thought you had it all in your head!" exclaimed Perkins, darting a glint of suspicion at the author. "Well, you know your business. Make it short, though. How long—a week?"

"You can have it in a week."

"All right. In a week you shall have your \$500." And Perkins bowed himself out, well contented.

Meeting Frarie upon the street at a later hour, Paine gayly accosted him with outstretched hand.

"Shake, old man!" he cried. "I have bounded into the ranks of the high priced story tellers."

Frie shook hands with his customary seriousness.

"How is that, Paine?" he queried.

"Have you hypnotized an editor?"

"Syndicate man, I think. I was too much surprised to ask for particulars."

"It doesn't matter. Perkins of Chicago wants to pay me \$500 for a story."

"Long live to Perkins of Chicago! I don't recall his name, but I am heartily pleased at your success, Paine."

When Perkins reappeared at the appointed time, he glanced over the first few pages of the manuscript with great satisfaction and counted out \$500 in payment.

"I hope this will be a success," the author civilly remarked. "I have made it as dramatic as possible, remembering your interest in Navy's conversation."

"It's a sure success," Perkins answered. "Good evening."

He shook hands effusively with Paine and immediately took his departure.

Paine's sleeping room adjoined his study, and the door between these

apartments was kept closed at night. When he opened it the next morning on his way down to breakfast, he uttered a sharp cry of dismay and sprang forward into the room excitedly.

During the night his desk had been ransacked and its contents strewn over the floor. Paine made a hurried search through both rooms, but nothing else, not even his watch and money, had been disturbed. Moreover, when he had carefully rearranged his disordered papers they were all accounted for, with this exception—every scrap of writing which related to John Navy had been stolen.

Early that afternoon Perkins returned. He appeared depressed and disconcerted, and his changed mien excited Paine's wonder.

"Did you like my story?" he asked.

"Yes, it is a good story," Perkins slowly responded. "It is something of an advance on the other. Still I don't find that it contains all I expected."

"Why, what did you want?" Paine was on his mettle now. "You would hardly expect a three volume novel for the price you offered."

"I didn't bid high enough, that's a fact," the publisher confessed. "But I want the rest of it—badly. I am thinking of making you a big offer for all you know about Navy."

"In a series of short stories like the others?"

"Oh, anyway you like—yes!" Perkins got up and walked the floor impatiently. "I can't explain it this way: You have what I want, and if I can make a deal with you we won't dicker about the price. Now, what can you do for me?"

"I can supply the demand," said Paine confidently. "But you must give me time for this. Unfortunately all my notes were stolen last night."

"That was all you knew about Navy?" asked Perkins hopelessly.

"Everything I had. Stay—there is Navy's own story, but I have already dipped into that for a few of his peculiar ideas."

"Navy's own story!" the publisher echoed in strong excitement. "What's that?"

Paine made a brief explanation, and upon learning the facts of this story Perkins drew a long breath as if tantalized almost beyond endurance.

"But you say that you copied it," he exclaimed, with a gleam of hope.

"Where's the copy?"

"It is still at my old home, packed away with a trunkful of old letters up in the attic."

"Then you could get it?"

"Certainly, if it is of value to you."

Strangely enough, the publisher's eagerness was quickly allayed by this reply. "We will let the matter rest awhile," he decided after a moment of abstraction and then quietly withdrew.

A few days afterward Paine received a letter and a paper addressed in his mother's handwriting. With a pleasant anticipation of home news he opened the letter, but its first paragraph drew from him a cry of surprise. His old home had also been entered by a burglar. It was a matter of slight importance, but in the light of his own recent experience it was sufficiently disturbing.

Further details made it very clear that both of these trivial robberies had been committed by the same mysterious person. As in the former case, nothing of value had been stolen, but the contents of an old trunk had been found scattered over the attic floor.

"I send you The Gazette, which has just arrived," Mrs. Paine wrote in conclusion. "I see that the Penniwell money has been recovered and that one of the burglars is in custody. Possibly this is the man who entered our house."

A sudden light broke in upon Paine's mind. There was but one man who knew of the papers in his trunk—one man who had shown an insatiable curiosity about John Navy. Snatching up The Gazette, he quickly ran over its prolix account of the arrest.

The last paragraph was especially interesting to Kepler Paine:

"The prisoner registered at the Union House at Perkins of Chicago. His connection with the Navy gang has been clearly established, and it appears that he discovered the long hidden booty by means of a cipher message from his old chief. Part of this cipher was contained in certain obscure phrases of a story entitled 'John Navy's Confession,' which was recently published in The Maxima."

THE END.

Perspiration.

Some interesting investigations have been made in the matter of perspiration, and the following conclusions have been arrived at: The perspiration is more concentrated on the right side of the body. It would, by the way, be interesting to know whether the opposite was the case in the left handed. The palm of the hand sweats 4 times more than the skin of the chest, and the cheeks 15 times as much. There is a slow increase in the sweat in the afternoon, especially noticeable from 8 to 12 o'clock at night. After midnight there is a diminution. Feeding has but little influence on this function. Elevation of the surrounding temperature increases the perspiration.—New York Ledger.

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10 A. M., "The Gospel Ministry," by Rev. W. R. L. Smith, D. D.

8:30 P. M., "Christian Education," by Rev. J. E. Jones, D. D.

8:30 P. M., "Christian Stewardship," by Hon. William Ellery.

Tuesday—Second Day.

9:30 A. M., "The Holy Spirit, a Person," by Rev. George Cooper, D. D.

11 A. M., "Christian Mission," by Rev. A. S. Thomas.

8:30 P. M., "The Holy Spirit in Regeneration," Rev. Geo. Cooper, D. D.

8:30 P. M., "Church History," by Rev. M. A. Jones.

Wednesday—Third Day.

9:30 A. M., "Faith," by Rev. H. A. Bagby.

11 A. M., "The Holy Spirit in Relation to Christ," by Rev. J. C. Hiden.

8:30 P. M., "The Missionary Spirit, a Mark of the True Church," by Rev. W. R. L. Smith, D. D.

8:30 P. M., "Church History," by Rev. Z. D. Lewis, D. D.

Please be on time at each meeting.

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